

**Wages**

Wage income for workers who were lucky enough to have kept their jobs fell almost 43% between 1929 and 1933. It was the worst economic disaster in American history. Farm prices fell so drastically that many farmers lost their homes and land. Many went hungry.

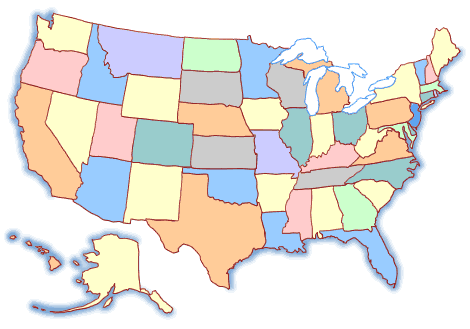
**The Wall Street Crash**

America 's "Great Depression" began with the dramatic crash of the stock market on "Black Thursday", October 24, 1929 when 16 million shares of stock were quickly sold by panicking investors who had lost faith in the American economy.

**The Great Depression**

**Unemployment**

At the height of the Depression in 1933, nearly 25% of the Nation's total work force, 12,830,000 people, were unemployed.



**Family Life**

Families split up or migrated from their homes in search of work.

Gangs of youths, whose families could no longer support them, rode the rails in box cars like so many hobos, hoping to find a job.

California

New York

It is estimated that nearly 50% of children during the Great Depression did not have adequate food, shelter, or medical care.

**California**

“Okies", victims of the drought and dust storms in the Great Plains, left their farms and headed for California, the new land of "milk and honey" where they believed all one had to do was reach out and pluck food from the trees. America 's unemployed were on the move, but there was really nowhere to go.

**Comprehension Questions**

Answer the following questions in your notebook.

1. When did the Depression begin?
2. How much did wages fall by?
3. At the height of the Depression, how many people were unemployed?
4. What percentage of the workforce was unemployed?
5. Why did families split up?
6. Where did people go to find work?
7. What was this land known as?
8. What was the reality of this place?

Challenge

1. What happened to farmers during the Great Depression?
2. What did people believe about California?
3. The Wall Street Crash took place in New York. From looking at the map, what do you understand about the journey people had to make?
4. What do the images tell you about the Depression?

Killer

1. What were the causes of ‘Black Thursday’?
2. Which parts of society do you think would be the worst affected by the Depression?
3. Do you think John Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men is an effective depiction of the Depression? Why?